

At this time the world was extremely addicted to augury, that is the forming of omens from the cry and flight of birds, and one day *Xanthus* sent *Æsop* into the yard, and told him, that if he saw two crows he would have good luck after it; but if he saw only one, it was a bad omen, and would be followed by some misfortune. *Æsop* on this slept out, and immediately returning, told his master he had seen two crows; upon which *Xanthus* went out himself, when finding but one, (for the other was flown away) he was exasperated at *Æsop* for making sport with him, and ordered him to be severely lashed; but while they were stripping him for the discipline, a person came to invite *Xanthus* to supper, on which *Æsop* cried, 'Where is the credit of your augury, when I that saw two crows am to be beaten like a dog, and you who saw but one are going to make merry with your friends?' *Xanthus* was immediately sensible of the justness of this remark, and therefore saved *Æsop* from the punishment that was going to be inflicted on him.

Soon after, *Æsop* had the address to obtain his liberty. The ring, which had the town-

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seal of *Samos* upon it, was upon a solemn day carried away by an Eagle, which, after hovering with it in the air, dropt it into the bosom of a slave. This the *Samians* imagined forboded some dreadful calamity to the state, and in great consternation called a council of their wise men, to give their sentiments on this strange event. They were all at a loss what to conclude from it, only *Xanthus* desired some few days time for further consideration; but being then as incapable as ever of giving a solution to so odd an incident, he informed *Æsop* of his perplexity, who instantly desired to be introduced to the council, promising to give them full satisfaction.

The next morning *Xanthus*, being willing to be freed from his uneasiness, introduced *Æsop*, when many of the council ridiculed his deformity and uncouth appearance; but being soon convinced, by the wisdom of his answers, that the faculties of his mind might compensate for the defects of his body, they consented to listen to what he had to say. Upon this he told them, that when he considered the importance of the question he was to determine, and the

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